

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CU-02 DHA-02 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07  
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 BIB-01 /083 W  
-----040536Z 058201 /15

R 031457Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8532  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMCONSUL MUNICH

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BELGRADE FOR USDEL CSCE

EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: PINT PL  
SUBJECT: POLISH MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST DISSIDENTS SUBSIDES

REF (A) WARSAW 3907, (B) WARSAW 3533

1. SHORT EDITORIALS CRITICIZING POLISH DISSIDENTS AND WESTERN  
MEDIA IN THE MAJOR POLISH DAILIES OF JUNE 3 SUGGEST THAT THE  
AUTHORITIES ARE WINDING DOWN THEIR WEEK-LONG CAMPAIGN PUBLICIZING  
THE ISSUE (REF A). A TRYBUNA LUDU ARTICLE APPROVED THE  
SEJM'S REFUSAL TO YIELD TO "DISTURBING EFFORTS TO SOW CONFUSION  
AND DISAGREEMENT" DURING ITS DEBATED ON MAY 30. IT CAUTIONED  
AGAINST OVERREACTING TO THE DISSIDENTS, WHOSE ACTIVITIES,  
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IT SAID, WERE "DOOMED TO FAILURE." IT CALLED FOR  
OPPOSITION TO ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN "OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK  
OF THE EXISTING POLITICAL SYSTEM", AND SAID DISSIDENT  
MOVEMENTS ARE DANGEROUS ONLY INsofar AS THEY DIVERT ATTENTION  
FROM THE REAL PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND THREATEN POLAND'S  
INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY. A SECOND EDITORIAL IN TRYBUNA  
LUDU CRITICIZED UPI AND THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

FOR ALLEGEDLY SPREADING DISINFORMATION IN THE PARTIAL ACCOUNT THEY GAVE OF PREMIER JAROSZEWICZ'S SPEECH OF MAY 30 ABOUT THE POLISH ECONOMY.

2. ZYCIE WARSZAWY OF JUNE 3 CARRIED AN EDITORIAL WHICH QUOTES THE STATEMENT OF THE WORKERS' DEFENSE COMMITTEE THAT THEIR AIMS HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED AND CONTENDS THAT THEIR REAL PURPOSE IS TO STIR TROUBLE. THE ARTICLE SAYS THAT THE QUALITY OF FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS FROM POLAND HAS IMPROVED, DESPITE ATTEMPTS BY THE DISSIDENTS TO PUBLICIZE THEIR ACTIVITIES ABROAD.

3. A WELL-KNOWN KRAKOW JOURNALIST RECENTLY TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER HE WAS DISMAYED AT THE POLISH PRESS CAMPAIGN, WHICH WAS BEGUN AFTER THE TENSIONS STIRRED BY THE KRAKOW DEMONSTRATIONS (REF B) HAD SUBSIDED. THE HUNGER STRIKE AT ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH IN WARSAW RECEIVED LESS ATTENTION WHILE IT WAS BEING HELD FROM MAY 24 TO MAY 31 THAN IT DID IN THE PRESS AND TELEVISION ACCOUNTS DURING THE TWO DAYS FOLLOWING. A HUNGARIAN JOURNALIST RECENTLY INTERPRETED THE LACK OF PUBLIC INTEREST AS RESULTING FROM THE FAILURE OF THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE TO REALIZE THAT WORKERS ARE RELATIVELY CONTENT WITH FOOD SUPPLIES, AND THAT IN ANY EVENT, "NO WORKER WOULD GO INTO THE STREET AS THE RESULT OF A STUDENT'S DEATH."

4. COMMENT: THE HUNGER STRIKE WAS MORE A MEDIA THAN A POLITICAL EVENT. WE CAN ONLY SURMISE THAT THE TIMING OF THE PRESS CAMPAIGN WAS DUE TO SLOW BUREAUCRATIC REACTION AND NOT TO PERCEPTIONS WITHIN THE PARTY OF A MOUNTING THREAT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE CAMPAIGN WAS ALSO DIRECTED AGAINST AND STIMULATED BY PRESS TREATMENT OF THE INCIDENTS IN THE WEST. A CBS REPORTER PREPARING A STORY ON RETIRED AMERICANS IN POLAND WAS SURPRISED WHEN SHE WAS SUMMONED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON JUNE 2 AND TOLD NOT TO PRODUCE A "SENSATIONAL STORY." FINALLY, THE PRESS CAMPAIGN MAY REFLECT THE CONTINUING SUSPICION AT THE HIGHEST PARTY LEVELS THAT THE SIGNALS IT RECEIVED FROM BELOW MAY NOT BE ACCURATE. RECENT MEDIA COVERAGE WOULD THEN REPRESENT AN OVERREACTION BASED ON UNCERTAINTY.

5. WHATEVER THE MOTIVES FOR THE CAMPAIGN, IT DID SERVE THREE PURPOSES. (A) IT GAVE THE REGIME AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT ITSELF AS THE DEFENDER OF LAW, ORDER, AND DUE PROCESS. (B) IT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO CAST BLAME ON THE TWIN FOREIGN DEMONS OF WEST GERMAN REVANCHISM AND THE ALLEGEDLY BIASED, "ANTI-POLISH" WESTERN PRESS, BOTH ISSUES WHICH COULD FIGURE IN DISCUSSIONS AT BELGRADE. (C) IT ALLOWED THE REGIME TO CONTROL THE DISCUSSION AND TO OBSCURE TWO ISSUES: THE LEGAL CASE -- OR LACK OF IT --

FOR HOLDING MEMBERS OF THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE IN PRISON,  
AND THE QUESTION OF SECRET POLICE HARASSMENT OF STANISLAW  
PYJAS BEFORE HIS DEATH IN KRAKOW ON MAY 7. END COMMENT.  
DAVIES

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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